

## JEWISH CULTURAL RECONSTRUCTION

DISTRIBUTION OF BOOKS IN THE U.S. FROM JULY 1, 1949 TO JAN. 31, 1952

<u>Name of Institution</u>	<u>No. of Items Received<sup>a</sup></u>	<u>No. Re- turned</u>	<u>Net Received</u>	<u>Rare Books Includ</u>
<u>A. Priority Libraries</u>				
American Jewish Historical Society, N.Y.	358		358	
Baltimore Hebrew College, Baltimore	4,554 <sup>b</sup>	2	4,552	132
Brandeis University, Waltham, Mass.	11,288 <sup>c</sup>		11,288	28
College of Jewish Studies, Chicago	7,521		7,521	117
Dropsie College, Philadelphia	6,700 <sup>d</sup>	1,151	5,549	255
Hebrew Teachers College, Boston	7,275 <sup>e</sup>		7,275	98
Hebrew Theological College, Chicago	5,946	99	5,847	99
Hebrew Union College, Cincinnati	9,820 <sup>f</sup>	67	9,753	268
Jewish Community Library, Los Angeles	1,061		1,061	
Jewish Institute of Religion, N.Y.	10,661	1,281	9,380	305
Jewish Theological Seminary, N.Y.	13,320	45	13,275	326
Mesifita Rabbi Chaim Berlin, Brooklyn	1,282		1,282	
Mesifita Torah Vodaath, Brooklyn	3,713 <sup>g</sup>		3,713	
Ner Israel, Baltimore	4,689		4,689	101
Rabbinical College of Telshe, Cleveland	156		156	
Yeshiva University, N.Y.	10,564 <sup>h</sup>	1,157	9,407	218
Yiddish Scientific Institute, N.Y.	12,360 <sup>i</sup>	679	11,681	64
<u>B. Smaller Libraries</u>				
B'nai Brith Hillel Foundation	1,073	448	625	10
Beth Medrash Elyon, Spring Valley, N.Y.	350 <sup>k</sup>		350	
Beth Medrash Govoha, Lakewood, N.J.	536		536	18
Herzliah, N.Y.	1,014		1,014	9
Jewish Education Committee, N.Y.	37		37	
Jewish Teachers Seminary, N.Y.	1,062	35	1,027	
Jewish Welfare Board, N.Y.	236		236	36
Mirrers Yeshiva, N.Y.	410		410	10
Rabbi Schneersohn Library, Brooklyn	3,294		3,294	19
Yeshiva of Flatbush, Brooklyn	465		465	
Zionist Archives, N.Y.	2,587		2,587	
<u>C. One Time Allocations</u>				
Hebrew Convalescent Home, N.Y.	182		182	
Hebrew Institute of Long Island	63 <sup>l</sup>		63	
Jewish Sanitarium & Hospital for Chronic Diseases, Brooklyn	100		100	
Jewish Settlement House, N.Y.	47		47	
New York Board of Rabbis	22		22	
Wall Street Synagogue, N.Y.	52		52	
Yeshivoth (through Torah Umesorah)	12,013		12,013	
Scholarly Organizations	5,318		5,318	

DISTRIBUTION OF BOOKS IN THE U.S. (CONTINUED)

<u>Name of Institution</u>	<u>No. of Items Received<sup>a</sup></u>	<u>No. Re- turned</u>	<u>Net Received</u>	<u>Rare Books Inclu</u>
<u>D. Non-Jewish Libraries</u>				
Columbia University	2,183		2,183	211
College of the City of New York	214		214	
Harvard University	2,166	246	1,920	51
Iowa University	185		185	5
Johns Hopkins University	45		45	
Joint University Religious Section, Nashville, Tenn.	423		423	
Library of Congress	5,708		5,708	163
New York Public Library	2,586	962	1,624	167
New York University	2,302	4	2,298	36
University of Pennsylvania	26		26	
University of Texas	635		635	
Yale University	<u>1,509</u>		<u>1,509</u>	<u>69</u>
TOTAL	158,111	6,176	151,935	2,806

a Includes periodicals and newspapers, individual issues, sheets, etc.

b Includes one photostat copy of Munich Talmud. Also received half a case with rabbinic fragments.

c Includes more than 5,000 non-Jewish books.

d Includes 3 incunables.

e Includes collection of Verein die israelitischer Religionslehrer, Frankfurt/M.

f Also received some archival material from Nazi archives and the microfilms of the Worms Community and Municipal Archives.

g Received an additional allocation of 535 books through Torah Umesorah

h Includes Stuermer Collection.

j Received many Yiddish newspapers which were unbound. The figure is therefore misleading as to actual titles. Also received some archival material from the European Hias offices.

k Plus 431 volumes through Torah Umesorah.

l Plus 129 volumes through Torah Umesorah

<u>Country</u>	<u>Museum Pieces</u>	<u>Synagog Pieces</u>	<u>Silver Scrap Metal</u>	<u>Other Scrap Metal</u>	<u>ments Unfit for Use</u>	<u>Ceremonial Objects</u>	<u>Scrolls</u>	<u>Frag- ments</u>	<u>Buried Scrolls</u>	<u>Total Scrolls</u>	
Israel	2,285	976				3,261	804	(87)	(127)	1,018	
United States	1,326	1,824			(apprx. 100)	3,230	110*			110	
Great Britain	245	66	(3,713 for melting)	(495 for melting)		311 (4,208 for melting)	12 (see below)			12	
France	125	219				344	(see below)				
Germany	31	89				120					
Western Europe (excl. France & Germany)		129				129					
Western Europe (incl. France & Great Britain)							98			98	
South Africa	150	66				216					
Canada		151				151					
Argentina		150				150					
Peru		35				35					
TOTAL	4,162	336	3,369	3,713	495	apprx. 100	12,175	1,024	87	127	1,238

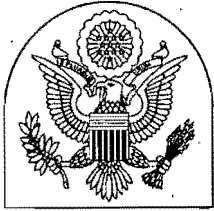
TOTAL CEREMONIAL OBJECTS DISTRIBUTED: 7,867

TOTAL TORAH SCROLLS DISTRIBUTED: 1,024

\* An unknown number will require burial.

Torahs + ?

Bronfman on LOC  
6.0.4-2-8



PRESIDENTIAL  
ADVISORY COMMISSION  
ON HOLOCAUST ASSETS  
IN THE UNITED STATES

## PRESIDENTIAL ADVISORY COMMISSION ON HOLOCAUST ASSETS IN THE UNITED STATES

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Edgar M. Bronfman  
Chairman

Kenneth L. Klothen  
Executive Director

For Immediate Release  
September 13, 1999

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Statement of **Edgar M. Bronfman**, Chair of the Presidential Advisory Commission on Holocaust Assets in the United States, regarding cultural property of Holocaust victims – namely, books of a Jewish religious nature – that may be in the possession of the Library Congress:

“The Presidential Advisory Commission on Holocaust Assets in the United States has shared with the Librarian of Congress our original research and other research that we have collected on Holocaust victims’ books that may be in the Library’s collections. We are satisfied with the Library’s initial response and look forward to working with the Library to learn about these books and determine what steps must be taken to ensure that justice will be done.”

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Background: The 21-member Presidential Advisory Commission on Holocaust Assets in the United States was created by the U.S. Holocaust Assets Commission Act of 1998 (PL 105-186) and given the mandate to:

- Conduct original research into what happened to the assets of Holocaust victims – including gold, other financial instruments and art and cultural objects such as books – that passed into the possession or control of the Federal government;
- Survey the research done by others about what happened to the assets of Holocaust victims; and
- Report to the President, making recommendations for actions to achieve justice.

To: Presidential Advisory Commission on Holocaust Assets in the United States

From: Kenneth Klothen, Executive Director

Re: Discussions with Library of Congress Regarding Looted Books in its Collection

Date: October 12, 1999

Commission staff have followed up on research originally conducted by Dr. Robert Waite of the Office of Special Investigations (OSI) at the Department of Justice, which indicated that between 1946 and 1949 books, including those looted from Jews, were taken into the Library of Congress collections from the Offenbach Depot, the repository in occupied Germany for books seized from Nazi sources. Our independent investigations led us to conclude that the original OSI work was accurate.

Having reached that conclusion, we requested a meeting with Dr. James Billington, the Librarian of Congress. At that meeting, held late in August and attended by Dr. Billington, the Associate Librarian for Library Services, the Head of the Hebraic Section, and the Library's General Counsel, the Library's staff expressed skepticism about our conclusions, and opined that their view of OSI's work was that it did not conclude that the Library's collection included looted books. Dr. Billington asked us to supply him with additional details regarding the basis and nature of our conclusions.

On September 14, we sent Dr. Billington a letter, in which we summarized our staff's pertinent research findings and suggested that a joint committee of senior staff of the Library and members of this Commission be named to address the issue, determine the relevant facts and arrive at an appropriate resolution.

Between September 14 and now, we continued to investigate this matter and held several discussions with staff at OSI regarding the evidence. As a result of these further efforts, we have come to believe that it is more difficult to prove that a significant number of the books from the so-called Rosenberg Collection that came into the possession of the Library of Congress were originally looted. **We have also concluded that the evidence is overwhelming that a significant percentage of the books that came into the Library's collection in 1949 from the Jewish Cultural Reconstruction Organization**

**were originally looted from Holocaust victims.** These refinements in our thinking were shared with the Library's staff.

On October 8, we received Dr. Billington's reply. In a letter delivered to our offices, Dr. Billington disputed our view of the OSI conclusions, citing language from the OSI report that confirmed the Library's primary interest in obtaining Nazi literature from Offenbach, and emphasized the finding that the books from the JCRO were non-restitutable. Dr. Billington declined our suggestion to form a joint committee to review the facts and determine appropriate actions.

In the Commission staff's view, Dr. Billington's letter fails to understand that the policies in place at the time these books were acquired assured only that restitutable books did not pass into the Library's collection. Non-restitutable books that had originally been looted could and did come into the Library's possession precisely through the good faith application of these appropriate policies. In suggesting that the issue is how many such books came into the Library, what they are and what acknowledgement should be made of this fact, the Commission staff is not implying that the Library has done anything wrong.

Ultimately, the Library is in the best position to determine what the facts are – by reviewing its own records. For example, we do not know what documentation the Library has of its accessions during the years 1946-1949. We do not know how easy or difficult it would be to review the Library's sub-collections, such as the Hebraic collection, to determine whether books contain evidence of having come from Offenbach and how many there are. We do not have a clear idea whether and how a cross-match of the Library's collection with existing lists or data bases of known looted books might be accomplished.

In a recent telephone conversation, the Library's General Counsel has indicated a willingness to "continue to discuss" this matter. We doubt whether much more in the way of staff-to-staff discussions will be fruitful, and remain convinced that it is appropriate for the Library to agree publicly to pursue, together with the Commission, the relevant facts pertaining to the provenance of all the Offenbach books in its collection. It is also appropriate, in our view, for the Library to consider – also in conjunction with the Commission – what if any recognition of these facts is appropriate.

Unfortunately, the Library seems unwilling to undertake the kind of transparent, high level effort the Commission's staff recommends.